



Committed to the future of rural communities.

2004

ANNUAL REPORT



**\$130,542,671 Invested In
VERMONT/NEW HAMPSHIRE**



Committed to the future of rural communities.

MISSION:
**“To increase economic opportunity
and improve the quality of life
for rural Americans”**

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HIGHLIGHTS

MORE THAN \$130 MILLION INVESTED IN VT AND NH

• INVESTMENT IN HOUSING:

- ◇ 471 families achieved home ownership
- ◇ 168 families received loan and grant funds to make their homes free of health and safety hazards
- ◇ Four non-profit groups received a total of \$238,500 in Housing Preservation Grants, leveraging other public and private funds for repairs to homes of low income homeowners
- ◇ VT and NH received 4% of the National allocation for multi-family housing: \$4.9 million for construction and rehabilitation of 208 units of multi-family housing
- ◇ \$11,481,840 in rental assistance was provided to 3,004 renters

• INVESTMENT IN RURAL UTILITIES:

- ◇ Provided \$16,620,434 for installation and upgrade of water and sewer systems to 13 communities
- ◇ A \$3,717,000 Broadband Loan was made in New Hampshire, the first Broadband Loan made by Rural Development in New England. The new system will serve more than 1200 homes and several businesses
- ◇ Seven organizations received Solid Waste Management Grants totaling \$645,800
- ◇ One Distance Learning and one/Telemedicine Grant were awarded for a total of \$738,215

• INVESTMENT IN COMMUNITY FACILITIES:

- ◇ A total of \$8,893,133 in low-interest loans to rural communities ensured access to public safety, recreation, cultural activities and a vibrant, alive place for the residents to call home.
- ◇ Thirty-four Community Facility grants were awarded totaling \$1,212,320 to address health, safety, and enhancement needs, for town halls, libraries, fire stations, emergency equipment and day care centers
- ◇ Working to meet as many community needs as possible, VT and NH obligated 670% of their initial Community Facility Program allocation

• INVESTMENT IN BUSINESS PROGRAMS:

- ◇ \$3.25 million in new Intermediary Relending Program loans was combined with \$687,500 of intermediary equity to establish or recapitalize small business lending programs
- ◇ Four lenders used the Business and Industry Loan Guarantee Program to make five business loans, totaling \$10,391,450, impacting 461 employees
- ◇ VT/NH farms, forests and agricultural organizations received grants totaling \$686,350

• INVESTMENT IN THE 'REAP' ZONE:

- ◇ More than \$8 million dollars were provided to homeowners, communities and organizations in the Northeast Kingdom, the Vermont designated Rural Economic Area Partnership Zone

MESSAGE FROM THE STATE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends:



Helping to build a community's hopes and dreams...USDA Rural Development works hard to offer financial and technical assistance across rural Vermont and New Hampshire. Our dedicated team of staff really do believe 'we are here to help' connect RD's resources for home ownership, business assistance, rural infrastructure, a vibrant and healthy community and value-added agriculture.

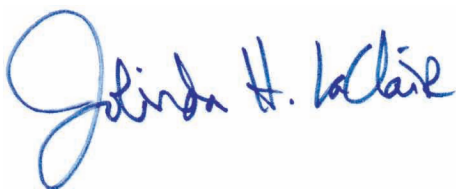
Fiscal Year 2004 was a banner year -- more than \$130 million was invested in the back yards of our two-state jurisdiction. The investment in dollars is large, but the impact these dollars have upon the lives of our rural citizens is even larger: a first-time home buyer unlocks the door of his or her new home; for the first time, a disabled person attends a community meeting via a newly constructed ramp; new jobs are created as a wood products manufacturer expands in a rural community, population 1000. Rural Development plays a role in all aspects of community life: safe playground equipment at an elementary school, a new 4-wheel drive ambulance to reach a citizen in need at the end of a mile-long dirt road, the wastewater treatment system that ensures a healthy environment, or the tele-medicine equipment linking state-of-the-art health care technology to rural areas.

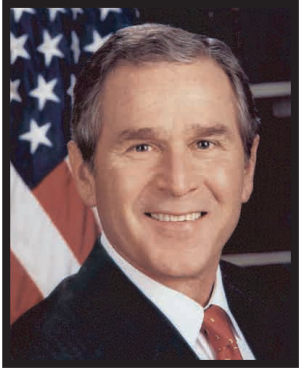
Working hand in hand with our partners in all sectors, Rural Development leverages millions of additional public and private funds to 'increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life in rural America.' Each year, we proudly recognize one outstanding partner in each state that applies creative, sometimes out-of-the-box ideas, with available resources and works closely with Rural Development staff to find solutions to rural community and economic development problems. Turn to page 13 to read more about our VT Partner of the Year, Central Vermont Community Land Trust, and our NH Partner of the Year, NH Community Loan Fund, as well as our first VT and NH Guaranteed Lenders of the Year which utilized RD's guaranteed rural housing program to help over 50 families achieve home ownership. Each of these partners make a very real difference!

President Bush and Agriculture Secretary Johanns recognize and promote the need to develop infrastructure in rural America, and our Congressional delegations ensure federal taxpayer dollars are returned to our rural families and communities. Achieving the American dream of 'home ownership,' helping to bring telecommunications to all rural communities, providing access to affordable health care, supporting first responders, and infusing capital for business development remain a top priority of this Administration and our Agency.

Our tagline, 'Committed to the Future of Rural Communities', depicts our efforts to link and leverage USDA Rural Development's programs and resources in Vermont and New Hampshire. We are proud of our 2004 accomplishments, and with our partners for strategic and sustainable development, we look forward to a successful year in 2005.

Sincerely,





PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH

“To give every American a stake in the promise and future of our country, we will bring the highest standards to our schools and build an ownership society. We will widen the ownership of homes and businesses, retirement savings and health insurance, preparing our people for the challenges of life.....”

From 2005 Inaugural Address

MESSAGE FROM THE USDA SECRETARY MIKE JOHANNIS

At USDA Rural Development, improving the quality of life and expanding economic opportunities in rural communities is measured in jobs created, families helped, infrastructure built, community facilities provided, and businesses grown. The mission is broad and—from increased homeownership to universal broadband access, from rural health care to business starts—it is at the heart of the Bush Administration’s commitment to rural America.

Under President Bush’s leadership, Rural Development has set new priorities including increased support for first responders, improved health care, universal access to broadband by 2007, and building an ownership society. Rural homeownership overall is at a record 76.1 percent, and USDA Rural Development is working to expand homeownership even more, particularly amount historically underserved minority populations. We are making programs more accessible by moving them online, working with borrowers to reduce delinquency rates, and providing venture capital for a diversifying rural economy.

This is an exciting era of growth and transformation, but the unique values and traditions of rural America still endure. President Bush, the USDA Rural Development team, and I respect these fundamental values of industry, personal responsibility, and free enterprise, and we are working hard to support rural families, businesses and communities as they build a vibrant future for all of rural America.



MESSAGE FROM ACTING UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT GILBERT GONZALEZ

Citizens and community leaders throughout rural American share a common desire to bring economic opportunity and an improved quality of life to their community. There is a remarkable cohesiveness among rural communities that allows the energy and enthusiasm of local citizens to harness the resources needed to bring solutions to economic and social issues facing their communities.

Today, more Americans than ever are realizing their dream of becoming a homeowner, bringing stability to families, neighborhoods and increasing personal family wealth through building of financial equity in their future. I am proud to say that 20 percent of the first-time homeowners receiving financing this year are minority families.

We are committed to aggressively working to help families, communities and businesses build the basic community infrastructure, help create more local jobs and gain access to educational and health care services and technologies that allow them to be better prepared to compete in a global environment.



HOUSING PROGRAMS

SINGLE FAMILY HOUSING: \$54,944,749

“The American Dream”

The **Single Family Housing Program** serves rural families that may not qualify for conventional financing. RD's **Guaranteed Housing Loan Program** provides loan guarantees to conventional lenders for the acquisition of homes by moderate income families. During Fiscal Year 2004, **255 families** became homeowners with the help of a Rural Development's **Guaranteed Housing Program Loan**.

Rural Development makes **Home Repair Loans** up to \$20,000 at 1% interest rate available to low income homeowners. Grants up to \$7,500 are available to homeowners 62 years of age and older to remove health and safety hazards. Additional home repair money for single family homes is provided through Rural Development's **Housing Preservation Grants**, awarded this year to *Gilman Housing Trust* in Lyndonville, VT, *Southwestern Community Services* in Keene, NH and *Tri-County CAP* in Berlin, NH.

Last year, 471 families in VT and NH became proud, first time homeowners.



New Homeowners Ann Hebbard and Kim Poitras pose with their families, Carolyn Chute-Festervan, Rural Housing Specialist and Rural Development State Director Jolinda LaClair at the Open House of Pepperidge Woods in Barrington, NH. Pepperidge Woods is a model, high-density single-family development (44 homes) that makes wise use of land while being sensitive to the environment.

One hundred and sixty-eight homeowners were able to take advantage of RD's **Home Repair Loan and Grant Program** during fiscal year 2004. Additional home repair funds were made available through three **Housing Preservation Grants** totaling \$238,500.



*The Walker family, of New Boston, NH, was able to make major repairs on their home with funding from USDA Rural Development's **Housing Repair Program**, the New Boston Baptist Church, and the Department of Housing, Urban Development's HOME program. Labor was provided by inmates from the State Department of Corrections' Community Service Program.*



Marion Humphrey, a 504 grant recipient, assists contractor Jim Reyes as they finish the new entrance to her home in East Burke, VT.



Funds from a 504 Repair Grant allowed this elderly family in Chittenden County, VT to replace a faulty roof and failed septic system.

HOUSING PROGRAMS

MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING: \$16,573,840

“RD pledges to provide affordable and safe rental properties”

During Fiscal Year 2004, \$3,150,000 was used to construct 78 new units of family housing and another 130 units were rehabilitated with \$1,785,200. More than \$11 million in project-based rental assistance was provided to assure that rental of 3,004 units did not exceed 30% of the renter’s income.

Hillscomb Apartments I



Hillscomb Apartments, a 24-unit family complex in Hillsborough, New Hampshire was financed by RD in 1984 for \$912,000. New owners recently received \$120,000 from RD and \$78,000 from Public Service of New Hampshire to complete a drainage project, re-roof the complex, replace 156 windows, install attic insulation, replace the refrigerators, and improve the lighting system.

Wall Street

Purchase and rehabilitation, by developer Housing Vermont, of a rental property in downtown Springfield, VT resulted in twelve units of critically needed housing. In addition to the \$700,000 loan from Rural Development, funds were provided by the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, The Rockingham Area Community Land Trust and the Town of Springfield.



School Street



Construction Analyst Joseph Silveira and Area Director Susan Hayes present a Certificate of Appreciation to Laz Scangas (center) for his hard work and dedication in the design of the School Street Family Apartments in Rutland, VT. The ten-unit family complex replaced a gravel parking lot and cold storage warehouse in a downtown neighborhood.

The **Multi-Family Housing Rental Direct Loan Program** provides funding to construct or rehabilitate affordable, apartment style housing for low income individuals, families and senior citizens. At present, the Vermont-New Hampshire jurisdiction has a portfolio of 143 properties with **4018 rental units**.

Farm Labor Housing Loans are made to provide safe, well-built affordable rental housing for farm workers. There are 92 units of Farm Labor Housing in VT and NH. During Fiscal Year 2004, one **Farm Labor Housing Loan** for \$146,000 was made in VT.

The purpose of the **Guaranteed Rural Rental Housing Program** is to increase the supply of affordable rural rental housing, for low- to moderate-income tenants, through the use of loan guarantees and partnerships between RHS and approved lenders.

BUSINESS AND COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS

LOANS: \$17,358,450

“For rural America to grow and attract jobs, tools are needed to promote business opportunities. Rural Development’s business programs provide those tools”.

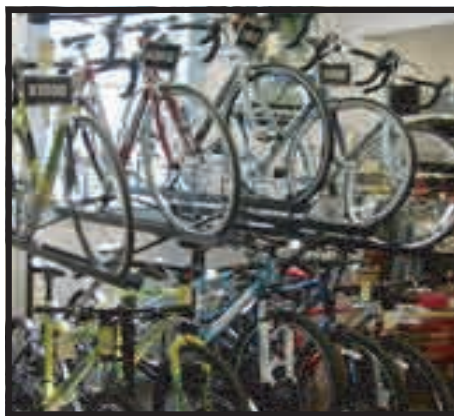
During Fiscal Year 2004, **461 jobs were impacted** as a result of the award of five guaranteed loans totaling \$10,391,450.

One hundred and sixty-six Vermont farmers and manufacturers provide more than 708 Vermont grown or manufactured products to the Middlebury Co-op. The co-op supports a membership of 1200 and is part of a dynamic \$11 billion dollar natural and organic retail food industry. USDA Rural Development provided a \$1.4 million Business Loan Guarantee to the Chittenden Bank for the Middlebury Co-op to build a new facility.



Congressman Bass joined Rural Utilities Service Deputy Administrator Curtis Anderson to announce the first Rural Development **Broadband Loan** in New England. *Merton Capital, LLC* received a \$3,717,000 loan to construct fiber to the premise broadband system in the town of Hanover, NH.

In 2004, we were pleased to provide an additional \$3,250,000 in capital to our intermediary borrowers: Northeastern VT Development Association, VT; Belknap County Economic Development Council, NH; Monadnock Economic Development Corporation, NH; and our three new intermediaries: Vermont Development Credit Union, VT; Rockingham Economic Development Corporation, NH; and Wentworth Economic Development Corporation, NH.



The Littleton Bike Shop is an IRP ultimate recipient. New owners of the successful downtown bike shop received a loan from Business Enterprise Development Corporation in Berlin, NH.



Lindy's Diner in Keene, NH was the first recipient of a loan from Intermediary Monadnock Economic Development Corporation. Lyndy's Diner is known as a Keene landmark for gathering of local, state and national politicians.

The **Business and Industry Loan Guarantee Program** offers a tool for lenders to provide favorable financing to Vermont and New Hampshire businesses that are providing good jobs and improving the economic climate of our communities. Benefits to the business include: access to higher loan amounts, lower interest rates and longer repayment terms.

The **Intermediary Relending Program** (IRP) is one of our most successful and active business programs. It provides low-cost capital to revolving loan funds which in turn re-lend the funds to small businesses.

6,746 jobs were impacted as a result of \$19,500,000 in loans to thirteen Intermediaries in RD's **Intermediary Relending Program** since its inception in 1988. Those funds have generated 514 subsequent loans for over \$32.4 million and leveraged \$138 million of private capital!

BUSINESS AND COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS

GRANTS: \$1,638,090

“Vermont and New Hampshire are states of small businesses. Support for this sector is critical to our economic success.”

Nineteen Rural Business Enterprise and Rural Business Opportunity Grants were awarded for a total of \$1,240,772.

A \$57,578 Rural Business Enterprise Grant was awarded to HGM-Development (Hannah Grimes Marketplace) to provide technical assistance to businesses that are part of the 200 member non-profit organization. Members are small farms, artisans, craftsmen and businesses in Cheshire County and beyond that have formed an alliance to develop and promote their products.

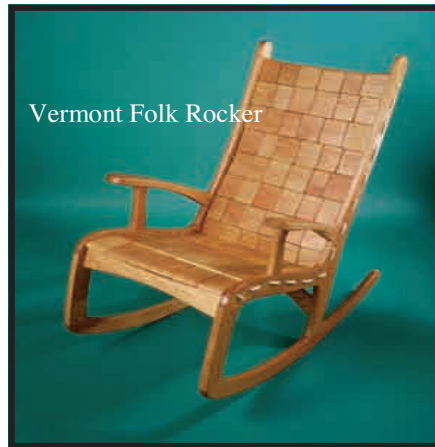
Connecting RD's Assets to the Working Landscape



Blue Spruce Farm in Bridport, VT received a \$97,318 RE/EE grant to purchase and install a gen-set for a methane digester. The power will be sold to CVPS as part of the Cow Power program.



Morse Farm



Vermont Folk Rocker

*The Vermont Maple Sugar Makers Association received a \$195,000 **Rural Business Enterprise Grant** to implement a marketing plan and provide technical assistance to maple sugar producers in the Northeast Kingdom. Visit their site at www.vermontmaple.org*

*The Vermont Wood Manufacturers Association received a \$27,854 **Rural Business Enterprise Grant** to provide technical assistance and training to 10 rural businesses that are participating in the Northern Forest Heritage Trail Champlain Valley Project. You can visit their site at www.vermontwood.com*

The USDA Rural Development **Rural Business Enterprise Grant** and **Rural Business Opportunity Grant** programs help small businesses start or expand by providing technical assistance or capital through a relending program.

Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Grants (RE/EE) were designed to help agriculture producers and rural small businesses reduce energy costs and consumption through the purchase of renewable energy systems and installation of energy efficiency equipment.

A \$300,000 **Rural Cooperative Development Grant** was awarded to the *NH Community Loan Fund* to provide assistance to owners of manufactured homes who want to form manufactured home park cooperatives.

The Vermont Public Television (VPT) will use a \$397,640 **Television Demonstration Grant** to produce this season's Outdoor Journal Series, three special affairs and cultural performance events.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

COMMUNITY FACILITIES: \$10,105,453

“Meeting our rural communities’ essential needs”

During fiscal year 2004, thirty-three grants totaling \$1,062,320 were awarded. *New Hampshire Community Loan Fund* received a nationally competitive \$150,000 Rural Community Development Initiative Grant to enable the City of Berlin to assess its present stock of housing, determine which housing units should be rehabilitated and which should be razed.



*Narrow, steep granite steps presented challenging access to the Goodwin Library in Farmington, NH, constructed in 1928. A \$22,500 **Community Facilities Grant** from USDA Rural Development helped construct a new accessible rear entrance with a lift.*



The Lamoille Adult Day Care Center in Morrisville, VT received a \$3,190 grant to purchase furniture, storage units and to replace interior lighting.



RD provided a \$62,625 grant to the town of Norton, VT to renovate the basement of their school house to use as the Town Clerk's office.

Rural Development provides funding to assist communities and non-profit organizations with development of facilities needed to provide essential community services such as child care, health care, education, fire and rescue and transportation.

Community Facility Grants are awarded to rural communities with a population of 20,000 or less. Grants are limited to 15% - 75% of the project cost, depending on the median household income of the service area.

Community Facility Direct Loans totaling \$7,393,133 were awarded to make road improvements, library renovations, construct a new facility for a humane society, enhance health facilities, child and adult day care facilities, construct public safety buildings and purchase safety equipment, and a rescue vehicle.

The Community Facility Loan Guarantee program was made available to *Community Recreation Exercise and Wellness Inc.* Rural Development guaranteed a \$1,500,000 loan from Union Bank of Morrisville to construct a new public recreation and ice skating facility in Morristown, VT. Other partners in this project include the Vermont Legislature and the Vermont Housing Conservation Board.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

RURAL UTILITIES: \$29,922,089

“Building infrastructure to provide rural businesses and households with modern telecommunications and 21st century water and wastewater systems.”

Two Distance Learning/Telemedicine Grants were awarded, one in Vermont and one in New Hampshire:



The Southeastern Regional Educational Service Center received a distance learning grant of \$499,965. The project pairs four hub sites that have unique competencies, educational content and resources, professional development, advanced class offerings, and continuing education opportunities



Senator James Jeffords presented a \$238,250 telemedicine grant to the Rutland Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice Inc. to purchase point-of-care electronic charting which will not only reduce the time a care giver spends on paperwork, but will also provide a tool for better communication between care givers.

Thirty-three loans, grants and guarantees totaling \$16,620,434 were made in Fiscal Year 2004. RD's grants continue to help the *Northeast Rural Water Association (NeRWA)* and the *Rural Community Assistance Program (RCAP)* work with small water systems in Vermont and New Hampshire.

Seven **Solid Waste Management Grants** were awarded in Vermont and New Hampshire again this year. This year's grants, totaling \$645,800, will be used to provide technical assistance and education to reduce the flow of solid waste, properly dispose of hazardous materials and to set up recycling programs. Applicants for Solid Waste Management Grants compete on a national basis for funding.

Thetford Students, members of the Youth Environmental Coalition, sponsored by the Association of Vermont Recyclers, sort their trash. Their waste audit prompted a revamp in their school's reduction practices that includes composting in school.



The Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant and Loan Program

provides funds to meet educational and health care requirements of the rural community.

Water and Wastewater Loans and Grants

are made to public bodies, non-profits and corporations to develop or improve water and wastewater systems in rural areas.

Solid Waste Management Grants

are made to non-profit organizations and public bodies to provide technical assistance and/or training to help communities reduce the solid waste stream.

*Washington Electric Coop, East Montpelier, VT, received two **Electric Loans** for \$11,520,000 from USDA Rural Development. Funds will purchase a methane digester to convert landfill gas to electricity and will be used to draft a four-year work plan.*

RD SALUTES

“Rural Development provides the financing, but it’s the management staff and employees that make the residents feel safe and secure and proud to call their apartment their home.”

NH SITE MANAGER OF THE YEAR



Mike Pelletier, Site Manager at Wentworth Place I and Wentworth Place II in Merrimack, NH, received the USDA Rural Development Site Manager of the Year Award for New Hampshire.

“Not everyone has the temperament and character needed to work in a housing complex for the elderly, with their varied needs and personalities,” said Jim Fowler, Rural Rental Housing Specialist with USDA Rural Development in New Hampshire. “Mike Pelletier has proven that he has that character and is more than a

maintenance man to the tenants, he is someone they can depend on.” Mike Pelletier has been the site manager at Wentworth Place I and Wentworth Place II since 2000. “Mike is serious at being busy,” said tenant Tami Zucchi. “Whatever the maintenance issue, whether big or small, he takes it on as one of great importance. I feel good knowing he is on the property working and assisting my other handicapped and elderly neighbors.”

Left to Right: Ted Cote, Property Manager for Stewart Property Management; Mike Pelletier, Site Manager of the Year; Jolinda H. LaClair, State Director, USDA Rural Development; James Fowler, Multi-Family Housing Specialist, USDA Rural Development; and Paul Stewart, Owner of Stewart Property Management.

VT PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMPANY OF THE YEAR THM

THM, a property management company headquartered in Manchester, Vermont, received the 2004 USDA Rural Development VT Property Management Company of the Year award. “This award allows us to highlight THM for the top-quality customer service they provide to the tenants of the properties they manage,” said LaClair. “THM consistently works to keep the property well maintained, safe and attractive.” THM manages thirteen Rural Development elderly and family properties in Vermont and New Hampshire, with a total of 421 units. They have six people on staff in the Manchester office and thirteen field personnel. “The THM staff is an exceptional team,” said Heidi Setien, Multi-Family Housing Specialist with USDA Rural Development. “They are very responsive to our requests for information, timely with all of their submissions, and always willing to adopt new RD procedures.”



Left to Right: Jolinda H. LaClair, State Director, USDA Rural Development; Ann Weeks, THM Property Manager; Heidi Setien, Multi-Family Housing Specialist, USDA Rural Development; Amy Pruess, THM Assistant to the Property Manager; Debbie Colegrove, THM Recertification Specialist; Barbie Towsley, THM Occupancy Specialist; Tammy Surpirse, USDA Rural Development Technician

PARTNERS MATTER!!

2004 Partners of the Year

Partners are key to Rural Development's success in meeting the needs of our rural residents. We know that RD does not stand alone; we need our federal, state, non-profit and private sector partners to help build rural communities where the residents can thrive and grow. We are pleased to honor four very special partners who work to support Rural Development's mission.



Central Vermont Community Land Trust (CVCLT) was the recipient of the 4th annual USDA Rural Development Vermont Partner of the Year Award. Tim King, CVCLT Executive Director, accepted the award. Posing with him is Cheryl Ducharme, Rural Development Specialist, who nominated the Land Trust for the award. CVCLT was honored for its success in ensuring that residents of Washington, Orange and Lamoille Counties have access to safe and affordable housing.

The 4th annual USDA Rural Development New Hampshire Partner of the Year Award was given to the **New Hampshire Community Loan Fund**. Accepting the award was Juliana Eades, President of the Loan Fund. NHCLF was honored for its leadership in strengthening the quality of life for New Hampshire communities and their residents.



Countrywide Home Loans, Inc. was the recipient of the first annual USDA Rural Development New Hampshire Guaranteed Lender of the Year Award. The honor is in recognition of Countrywide's outstanding support and participation in the USDA Rural Development Single Family Housing Guaranteed Loan Program. Countrywide processed more than 24% of all the guaranteed housing loans made by Rural Development in NH in 2004. Thirty-three families are now proud homeowners as a result of Countrywide's participation as a Rural Development Guaranteed Lender.

Chittenden Bank was the recipient of the first annual USDA Rural Development Vermont Guaranteed Lender of the Year Award. The honor is in recognition of Chittenden Bank's outstanding support and participation in the USDA Rural Development Single Family Housing Guaranteed Loan Program. Chittenden Bank processed more than 19% of all the guaranteed housing loans made by Rural Development in VT in 2004. Twenty-two families are now proud homeowners as a result of Chittenden's participation as a Rural Development Guaranteed Lender. Accepting the award from Rural Development's Housing Director Robert McDonald, is Chittenden's Senior Vice President Louise Sandberg.



COMMUNITY SUCCESS STORY

Connecting the Assets. “We have the people, the programs, the vision it takes to make a difference..to build a town from the ground up.”

... former Rural Development Under Secretary Thomas Dorr

SPRINGFIELD, VT: In the last four years, more than \$14.5 million in Rural Development loans and grants have been awarded to enhance economic development, provide housing and improve community services in Springfield, VT.

The Springfield Family Center received a \$484,523 Community Facility Loan to help with the purchase and restoration of its new facility, a \$127,100 Community Facility Grant to purchase and install a new boiler, and a \$5,000 Community Facility Grant to pay for an architect’s report.



Infrastructure:

Water and sewer upgrades were made with a combination of loans and grants totaling \$7,668,360. Southern Windsor/Windham Solid Waste District has received \$99,000 in Solid Waste Management Grants to employ a coordinator to assist member municipalities with reduction of solid waste stream.

Business and Economic Development:

\$96,000 in Rural Business Enterprise Grants and Rural Business Opportunity Grants were obligated to provide technical assistance to small businesses. Business Loan Guarantees of \$3,500,000 to Vermont Machine Tools and \$2,560,000 Ellsworth Ice Cream were provided, ensuring job retention and creation.

Housing:

There are two RD financed rental housing properties in Springfield: 44 units of family housing and 28 units of elderly housing.



BERLIN, NH: USDA Rural Development has focused outreach and technical assistance in the Berlin region, recently adding a full-time staff person in the Berlin office. More than \$6,697,000 has been invested in Berlin, NH in the last four years.

Northern Community Investment Corporation (NCIC) received a \$34,900 Rural Business Opportunity Grant to plan the revitalization of a Berlin City downtown block.

Infrastructure:

The City of Berlin water system received major improvements with a combination Water and Wastewater loan and grant totaling \$3,600,000.

Business and Economic Development:

A \$750,000 Intermediary Relending Loan was made to the Business Enterprise Development Corporation to capitalize its revolving loan fund. A \$34,800 Rural Business Enterprise Grant is being used to develop the “Handmade in the Northern Forest Guide Book” that will showcase 50 local artisans and guide tourists to their locations. Isaacson Steel received a \$2,000,000 Business Guarantee Loan.

Housing:

Tri-County Community Action Program used a \$50,000 Housing Preservation Grant to make repairs to 22 single family homes. North Woods Mobile Home Park Cooperative used a \$50,000 Community Facility Loan to pave and finish-coat roads and driveways in the 42 household mobile home park cooperative. A housing study of the viability of housing stock was conducted with funds from a \$150,000 Rural Community Development Initiative Grant.

Community Services:

The Northern Forest Heritage Park used a \$27,800 Community Facility Grant to replace a heating system and to make accessible renovations.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT CARES



OPERATION TROOP SUPPORT

Staff from the Montpelier, VT office of USDA Rural Development collected items to be sent to the military troops in Iraq. Left to right: Heidi Setien, Eric Young, Sharon Lafley and Paul Hill.

GOVERNOR'S CORPORATE CUP CHALLENGE

USDA Rural Development had two running teams and a walking team entered into the annual Governor's Corporate Cup Challenge. Proceeds from the race are given to the Governor's Commission on Health and Fitness. Left to right: Jolinda LaClair, Rhonda Shippee, and Robert McDonald. Other RD team members include: Naomi Hatch, Jonathan Harries, Paul Hill, Heidi Setien, Sherri Austin and Paula Higgins.



TOYS FOR TOTS

NH staff members Nancy Domina, Scott Johnson and Marilyn Jenks put finishing touches to a Christmas tree surrounded by presents collected for the Marine Corp Toys for Tots.

DAVID'S HOUSE

David's House is a home-away-from-home for children and families of children receiving treatment through Children's Hospital at Dartmouth, NH. As a holiday care project, VT and NH staff from Rural Development collected boxes of food, toys, games, and supplies for David's House. Left to right: Susan Poland, Connie Doucette, Heidi Setien, Sandra Hawkins, Linda Woodard and Jolinda LaClair.



THE RD STAFF

Proud To Work For RD!!!

Vermont and New Hampshire



The dedicated and professional staff of USDA Rural Development for Vermont and New Hampshire are available to assist individuals who want to buy their first home, businesses that want to expand, and communities that want to provide essential services for their residents. They are proud to be part of an organization that works to “increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for rural America”.

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT
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